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Subject: FW: Weekly Update: The momentum we're celebrating in Memphis

From: Mayor Jim Strickland <MayorOffice@communications.memphistn.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 24, 2018 2:19 PM
To: Bill Gibbons <bgibbons@memphiscrime.org>
Subject: Weekly Update: The momentum we're celebrating in Memphis



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Friends,

If you click just one link in today's Weekly Update, I hope it's [this one from the Building Design + Construction publication](#). An excerpt: "Memphians are feeling a fresh wind blowing off the Mississippi, invigorating them with the possibility of a much brighter future."

I agree!

As we confront our challenges with real action, it's just as important to also take stock of all the momentum around us. I did exactly that last night, when I visited with old friends and spoke at the Evergreen Historic District Association's annual August meeting.

As always, it was a great time.

I think it's important for you to know what's going on in Memphis, too. So I thought I'd share my notes from last night in today's email:

- We've worked hard to deliver an **efficient government**, with a [recently upgraded bond rating](#) that serves as outside confidence in our financial trajectory.
- We're [fixing solid waste service](#). In the next couple of months, we'll ramp up curbside trash service collection to every-other-week, and without needing to call 311 to report it's there. Stay tuned for details.

- We found a creative way to [fund Pre-Kindergarten](#) without raising your taxes. It's a great, long-term way to help decrease our unacceptable rate of poverty.
- We've [doubled street paving](#) from just four years ago.
- Our team found a creative and legal way to **remove divisive Confederate statues** that didn't fit our modern, diverse city.
- We should lead by example with **minority business contracting**, so we are. [We're up 98 percent in that category](#) in our first two fiscal years.
- We are working closely with developers to bring **game-changing new investments** to our city, such as the [Loews hotel and accompanying office tower development](#) that will also revive 100 N. Main. Some \$13 billion in new development is happening in Greater Memphis, with most of it inside our city limits.
- When I became mayor, it took an average of 60 seconds for us to answer your **911 call**. Now, it's under 7 seconds.
- When we took office, the live release rate at **Memphis Animal Services** was around 50 percent. Now, it's closer to 90 percent, and [MAS just got an award](#) for being one of the top five shelters making progress in the country.
- When we took office, the only way to apply to become a Memphis Police officer was via paper application at a precinct. That's just one way our recruiting structure wasn't up-to-date. We fixed that, became more aggressive with our **police recruiting**, and we just had our first net annual gain of officers in seven years.
- We're doing more for our **youth** as we reinvest in core assets in our neighborhoods like community centers, libraries, and parks. We had staffed play at our parks this summer for the first time in decades, we made summer camp free at community centers, and library program attendance is [up 106 percent](#) since 2015.
- The items in these last two bullet points — along with raising private money for expungements of nonviolent records, lobbying for stiffer sentences for violent crimes to stop the revolving door at 201 Poplar, and working to increase economic opportunity — are major pillars of our [crime reduction plan](#).
- As for economic opportunity, some 20,000 more Memphians are working today than when I took office, and major corporate investments like ServiceMaster's move Downtown, FedEx's \$1 billion renovation of its world hub, and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital's expansion are testaments to our **momentum**.

Speaking of momentum, I spoke this week to a group of site selectors from across the country who help advise businesses on where to locate and grow. I shared some of what I said above, but also told them how Memphis is starting to populate some "good" lists — like having the No. 1 place where millennials want to work, being a top-five city for millennial population growth, ranking the No. 1 city for black-owned businesses, and being the No. 4 city for women-owned businesses.

And check out what our friends at MLGW report: As of the end of 2017, MLGW serviced 311,643 electric customers in Memphis — up from 308,686 just a year earlier. It's also the highest number of electric customers in at least five years. (See more numbers [here](#).) While this isn't the only data point determining population loss or growth, it's a great indicator.

We have great challenges ahead of us, no doubt. Working on those is what occupies most of my time. Yet we'd be foolish if we didn't also celebrate our successes — both as a team at City government, and as Memphis as a whole.

Our best days are in front of us. And as I told the site selectors Tuesday, come be part of our

momentum now — before it's too late.

Yours,



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